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THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

by Rev Professor J.C. O'Neill

If we had only the Gospel of John and could trust its evidence implicitly, we would answer the question about the origins of Christian baptism simply thus. The Jews expected that the prelude to the time when the Messiah would reign in triumph would be marked by the appearance of 'a Baptist'. This 'Baptist' would be either the Messiah himself or a second Elijah or the prophet (1.25). John rejected these specific designations and said he saw himself as 'A voice crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord' (1.19-23). Perhaps he believed he was an angelic messenger incarnate; that is a tradition of interpretation that Origen knew (Comm in Joh ii.31 (25) GCS 10.189-90: prayer of Joseph).

Jesus was probably baptized by John; the most natural interpretation of the saying that John saw the Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and abiding on him is that this occurred at baptism.

Jesus himself was a Baptist (3.22; 4.1) and his disciples also baptised, in this presumably following the example of John the Baptist's disciples. The statement in John 4.2 that Jesus himself did not baptize but his disciples did probably means what the Syriac Sinaiticus makes it mean: Jesus himself was not the only one who baptized but his disciples did also. The statement seems to be a blunt negative (not this but that), but we know the common idiom found in the Old Testament and other Jewish writings by which this expression conveys the idea: not only this but that (e.g. Gen 45.8). The Syriac translator was familiar with the idiom and translated accordingly.

Against John we have to set the massive silence of the Synoptics; none of them mentions any baptizing by Jesus or his disciples. Matthew ends with the command of the risen Lord to baptize, while Luke-Acts first mentions Christian baptism at Pentecost, in Peter's speech. Presumably large numbers of those who heard Jesus had been baptized by John and John's disciples, but

whether Jesus and the disciples baptized during the ministry of Jesus we are not told. Crowds are fed, not baptized.

Nevertheless the evidence of Paul in 1 Corinthians seems to support John's assertion that Jesus baptized. The people who say 'I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas' were probably baptized by Paul and Apollos and Cephas or by their followers. (Paul thanks God he only baptized Crispus and Gaius, giving the least possible occasion for founding a sect or sub group.) The natural conclusion would be that those who said 'I am of Christ' had been baptized by Jesus Christ himself. Paul simply reminds his readers that Christ bears a privileged position as a Baptist because it was Christ who was crucified for those who were baptized, and even though they were baptized by Paul or Apollos or Cephas they were baptized in the name of Christ.

But if Jesus baptized, surely we should expect to find evidence in the Synoptic Gospels that Jesus told his disciples to baptize?

The argument from silence is notoriously tricky. For example, Colin Hickling has recently argued that although Paul himself 'almost certainly...takes it for granted that all those to whom he writes have been baptized' (250), 'the balance of probability weighs ... against [his]... having been baptized' himself (257-9). Hickling's reason for saying this is that Paul surely would have mentioned his baptism, when speaking on oath about his 'total independence, as a Christian, from any Christian predecessor or contemporary': 'receiving baptism is, after all, *receiving* something' (258). I wonder. Would not someone who assumed all Christians were baptized have had to explain the reason he was not baptized, if that were the case? Are we entitled to brush aside the report that Ananias baptized him (Acts 9.18; 22.16), and would his baptism by Ananias have at all weakened his case for independence in the first chapter of Galatians?

The lack of any explicit reference to baptism in the mission charge to the disciples is nevertheless extraordinary, if it were indeed assumed that they would baptize. The mysterious command to wipe off the dust from their feet as they left cities that did not accept the message made me wonder if the dust needed wiping off because the missionaries had not been able to stand in any water in that place in

order to baptize families that received them with fear and joy as ambassadors of the coming messianic kingdom (Matt 10.14; Mark 6.11; Luke 9.5).

Perhaps Matt 28.28 is another small tell-tale indication that the disciples had previously baptized before Jesus' death. If preaching to 'all nations' means preaching to the Gentiles and baptizing them, that would imply the disciples had already baptized Jews and would presumably continue to do so.

It might be objected that my view assumes that people who came to believe that Jesus was Messiah could have been active in their new allegiance on the strength of John the Baptist's baptism; some of the apostles seem to have been baptized by John and then, without further ado, to have become disciples of another Baptist, Jesus.

That certainly fits the account of Apollos at the end of Acts 19: he had been baptized by John the Baptist and preached Jesus; all he needed was a little more instruction before becoming an accredited missionary. However, it does not fit the account of the twelve disciples Paul is reported as meeting in Ephesus who had received John's baptism but who did not know about Jesus and who had not received the Spirit. They were baptized and had hands laid on for the reception of the Spirit (Acts 19.1-6). This is a difficult passage on any showing. My only suggestion is to conjecture that a scribe who wanted to deepen the contrast between Jesus and John the Baptist changed the word ἐπίστευσαν in Acts 19.5 to ἐβαπτίσθησαν. If my conjecture is right, the original text says that the twelve had not heard that the Holy Spirit foretold by John had been given (see the reading of D in 19.2), and had not heard John speak of Jesus. When they heard about the giving of the Spirit and about the identity of the one who John had preached was to come they believed and Paul laid his hands upon them so that they received the Spirit.

To those who say, John the Evangelist made up the idea that Jesus baptized in order to demonstrate to the later followers of John the Baptist that Jesus did what their master did and did it more successfully, I ask in return: Would it not have been more effective to say that John the Baptist was inferior to Jesus because he baptized foretelling Jesus, a Jesus who did not have to baptize foretelling anyone?

To those who say that John's Gospel reports that Jesus baptized for a time, when he was John the Baptist's disciple, but then he stopped, I ask, How could the tradition remain silent about the reason for the *volte face*? (This is quite as good an argument from silence as I have been concerned to rebut.)

The question of whether or not Jesus baptized is of secondary importance. The question for us is what went before Jesus and John, not just what went before historically in the way of forerunners (if, indeed, there were any) but what went before in the way of expectations. Here John gives us a valuable clue in his list of the typological significance John's questioners thought would attach to anyone who appeared as a Baptist, a baptizer. A Baptist would be the Messiah, Elijah or the prophet. John himself allowed for another possibility, that a Baptist would be a Voice Crying in the Wilderness.

The reference to the prophet is particularly interesting. I presume the reference is to 'a prophet like unto me' of Moses' speech in Deut 18.15.20 referred to in Acts 3.22; 7.37. But is not this just the typological parallel Paul seems to know when he writes in 1 Cor 10.1-2 that our fathers were all under the cloud and they all went through the sea and they were all baptized 'into Moses' in the cloud and in the sea? The idea of passing through the sea occurs in another New Testament passage referring to baptism, in 1 Peter 3.20b-21a. David Cook has shown that we should translate something like this: the forbearance of God was waiting expectantly in the days of Noah, while an ark was being prepared "into which a few, that is eight persons, came safely through water" (77). Cook refers us to the rabbinic tradition concerning Gen 7.7: 'R. Johanan said: [Noah] lacked faith; had not the water reached his ankles he would not have entered the Ark' (Bereshith Rabbah, ed Wünsche, Leipzig 1880; Midrash Rabbah ed Freedman and Simon, London 1939, i.252-3). We remember that baptism in the early church was by affusion, the candidates standing in water up to the ankles (von Campenhausen). Compare the passage in the Shepherd of Hermas which talks of the moat that surrounds the heavenly tower. The Shepherd asked the Lady, 'Why has the tower been built on the water, Lady?' She answers, 'Hear, then, why the tower has been built upon water'. It is 'because your life was saved and shall be saved through water (διὰ ὕδατος)', that is, presumably by the one

who is saved going to the tower through water as Noah went to the ark through water (Hermas, Vis 3.3.5). Compare the enigmatic references to being saved 'through water' in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (T.Asher 7.3).

There is a further allusion to baptism that in one vivid flash lights up a whole set of ideas connected with the prophetic sign. When Jesus is asked for chief seats at the right hand and the left, he replies (as reported in Mark 10.38) in the enigmatic words, 'Can you drink the cup that I am drinking or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?' There is a similar word in Luke 12.50: 'I have a baptism with which to be baptized and how I am constrained until it is accomplished'. He can assume that baptism is connected with death. More than that. He assumes that the baptized escape death because the Baptist suffers a real death. Can that assumption have been current at the time of Jesus, or are we to believe that this is a creation of later theologians who have provided Jesus with a saying that embodies the idea that baptism is a symbol of death with its counterpart in the real death of the one in whose name believers are baptized? The difficulty in the theory that these two verses are the creation of theologians is that they simply assume that the noun 'baptism' and the verb 'to baptize' refer to martyrdom rather than seek to create a new significance for a rite already well known through the activity of John the Baptist.

The sayings presuppose that the baptism by a Baptist of those who do not have to die ties the baptized to the baptism of a figure whose baptism consists of dying. The same phenomenon meets us in Paul. Paul does not speak as a theologian who wants to create a new connection between a well known rite (baptism) and a hitherto unconnected fact. He assumes that the connection between baptism in the name of Christ and Christ's death is old and fundamental: 'Or are you ignorant of the fact that those of us who were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death?' (Rom 6.3).

Were there any supposed Baptists before John?

There are plenty of references in Jewish literature of our period to lustrations and religious washings. Josephus as a young man became a zealot (ζηλωτής), a devoted disciple, of Bannus who lived in the desert, wore clothes made from leaves and bark, lived on wild vegetation, and bathed himself in cold water day and night for

purity's sake (Vita 11). Presumably Josephus bathed himself as did his master, yet he never suggests that Bannus was a Baptist who baptized others. Similarly, the Sibylline Oracles 4.162-170 speak of the need for repentance: 'Abandon daggers and groanings, murders and outrages, and wash your whole bodies in perennial rivers.' Perhaps we have here a transferred epithet, meaning wash your bodies perpetually in rivers. In any case SibOr 3.591-3 seems to speak of continual acts of self-purification; the righteous are 'always sanctifying their flesh with water'.

E.P.Sanders has reminded us of the prevalence of stepped pools for immersion cut into the bedrock of Palestinian houses (222-229). These ritual baths were not for a Baptist to use in order to baptize others; they are baths into which those seeking purification immersed themselves. Self-immersion has nothing much to do with the origins of baptism, for baptism needs a Baptist. That is the reason why proselyte purification is unlikely to have anything to do with the origins of Christian baptism, for proselytes immerse themselves. Two (or three) teachers were present as witnesses for the men, but there is no baptism involved. Furthermore, proselyte baptism was only for Gentiles (Lohfink 41-2).

There is no doubt that a member of the community described in 1QS took part in daily acts of self-purification (1QS 3.4-7; Josephus BJ 2.129,138); archaeological work has uncovered stepped cisterns far too numerous for ordinary drinking and washing, and that confirms the evidence in documents belonging to the community and in reports of well-informed outsiders like Josephus. But did a Baptist baptize a new member of the community at the point when he was allowed to share the waters? This is much disputed, but the reference to sprinkling with lustral water in 1QS 3.9 at least raises the possibility that someone, a Baptist or the disciple of a Baptist, first sprinkled the new member before that member entered the flowing water in the cistern for the first time. The unexpected verb "to sprinkle" (*nzh*) is used in the next column of the Manual of Discipline (1QS 4.21). The passage speaks of how God has set an end to the existence of perversity which at the time of visitation he will destroy for ever. Truth will arise, and God will cleanse by his truth all wicked works of men. This cleansing will be by the Spirit of Holiness and God 'will sprinkle over them the Spirit of Truth as

lustral water'. These are those chosen by God to share all the glory of the Man (presumably the second Adam) (1QS 4.18-23).

Now here is a significant fact. The verb 'to sprinkle' used here (*nzh*) is the verb used in the Servant Song that begins at the end of Isaiah 52 (Isa 52.15): 'So shall he sprinkle many nations' - a translation not now favoured because so unexpected with an object 'nations', but one which the Qumran sectaries must have found possible, since they used the verb of lustrations with water. The idea of sprinkling to cleanse is found elsewhere, of course (Ezek 36.25; 43.18), but the verb of the Scrolls is the verb used of a Baptist who will suffer for the sins of others.

Another tiny scrap of evidence perhaps supports this possibility. In the Damascus Document (CD [msB] 19.5-14) there is a description of the poor of the flock who will be saved at the time of visitation when the Messiah of Aaron and Israel comes. A mark shall have been put on the forehead of those who sigh and groan and they will be spared. That is, of course, a citation of Ezekiel 9.4, the passage about the man in linen with an inkhorn at his side. In Ezekiel the old, the young, maidens, little children and women are specifically said to be marked with this saving sign (Ezek 9.6). The community of the Damascus Document also consisted of old and young, married and children. Even manservants and maidservants are said to have been brought within the covenant of Abraham by the master (CD 12.10-11). When children reach the age of enrolment (which must be something different from being a member of the covenant) they swear an oath of the covenant, which looks like the confirmation of something that had already been done for them. It is a short step to conjecture that the sign of the covenant was sprinkling, or marking with water.

The founder of the covenant was said to have dug a well (CD 19.34) and is compared to a fountain of life in whom the covenanters believed (1QH 8.4,7,13,16; 18.10). The possibility is that he was a Baptist whose successors in leadership of the married and celibate communities he founded continued the practice of baptizing.

I have been arguing that there was a generally shared belief that in God's good time Baptists would come who would perform baptism to prepare in some way for the coming of the Kingdom of

God. I have tentatively suggested that two sayings of Jesus might lead us to conclude that there was a belief that the Baptist had to die.

Let us gather up the scattered observations about baptism and ask whether we cannot imagine a set of interpretations of Old Testament passages that would underpin the expectations that seem to be part and parcel of popular religion at the time of Jesus. How did they read scripture so as to get the idea that a Baptist would come, or several Baptists would come to prepare people to enter the Kingdom of God? Is there any evidence they read any of these passages as requiring the death of the Baptist?

If our reading of 1 Peter is right, some interpreted the entering of the ark as baptism: Noah and his family waded through the water to the ark and were saved by passing through the water of destruction. According to one of our earliest descriptions of baptism, in the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, baptism was administered by deacons standing in the water with the people to be baptized and pouring water over their head three times. Could the rain that was falling as Noah and his family waded to the ark be one origin of this practice? There is no mention of Noah as baptist - here God is the Baptist - and no particular emphasis on Noah's death: he had 350 years to go after he left the ark. We should perhaps note that Philo takes Noah's drunkenness and nakedness as a type of the soul's escape from the body as from a tomb (Qu. in Gen 2.69, end).

The reference to Moses in 1 Cor 10 is much more promising for our quest. Again we have the passing through water - admittedly dry-shod - and the covering with a cloud, which perhaps represented in this typology the baptism itself. The fathers were baptized 'into' Moses as Christians were later said to be baptized 'into' Christ (Rom 6.3; Gal 3.27). This at least means by the authority of Moses and may mean into allegiance to Moses; we recall that the Galatians passage goes on to say that those baptized into Christ have put on Christ, presumably put on the armour of Christ. Dr Hayman has drawn my attention to the painting on the west wall of the synagogue at Dura which shows the Israelites led by Moses into the Red Sea clothed in dirty garments and coming out of the Red Sea clothed in white garments such as Christians adopted after their baptism.

This baptism in the Red Sea was made possible by a death, the death of the Lamb. Despite Jeremias's doubts, it seems likely

that the Lamb as a symbol of the Messiah was already established in Judaism. We recall that those who have got the victory over the beast and his mark (did the beast have a form of baptism too?) stand on a sea of glass mingled with fire and sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb (Rev 15.3). The sea of water they passed through enables them to stand on the sea of fire. But did Moses, the prototype of the prophet who was to come, die? Our narrative says that he died before the people crossed Jordan and entered the promised land (Joshua 1), but is there any emphasis on his death? Alison Jack has reminded us of the passage Goodenough drew attention to. This passage, in commenting on Exodus 33.20,23, Moses' unique vision of God, describes Moses' vision as a sort of death in the midst of life: 'If anyone should die to this mortal life, that person will live, receiving the immortal life; perhaps that person will see what was never before seen' (Harris 72). And we remember that Moses was forbidden to enter the promised land because he did not glorify God at the waters of Meribah (Numbers 27.12-14; 20.1-13). Perhaps his death was to bear the sin of the people who forgot their baptism at the Red Sea.

Joshua's crossing of the Jordan appears prominently in our New Testament traditions because John the Baptist deliberately chose Jordan for his baptisms. Joshua's death is not important, but we recall that Elijah, the prophet who was expected to point forward to a second Elijah, passed through Jordan to his death, carried up to heaven in a fiery chariot. We note also that Jesus' name was Joshua.

Finally, the suffering servant of Isa 53 is the one who will sprinkle many nations (Isa 52.15), and the verb to sprinkle is the verb used in the Manual of Discipline to mark the first entry of a new member into the waters of purification.

I am surprised by the richness of the possible allusions to the Old Testament we can find if we allow ourselves to imagine that a common theology of baptism was alive at the time that John the Baptist first began to baptize and which was continued direct over into the early church. But much is conjecture. I plead that unless we try to imagine what such a set of beliefs would have been like and how they would have been based on scripture, we cannot advance further in discovering what people thought at the time of Jesus. If the growing knowledge we have of Jewish beliefs at this time shows

Melchizedekian high priest has now entered and thereby gains access for all those who will follow him'.⁵

For others, however, the recipients faced, not so much the danger of relapsing but rather the failure to grasp the opportunities afforded by Christianity, the yearning for the certainties of Judaism and the temptation to be held back by the conservatism of their Jewish and Jewish Christian friends. Manson had proposed this idea many years ago when he suggested the recipients were failing to grasp the challenge of leaving the safety of a *religio licita* and embark boldly on a Gentile Mission. Barnabas Lindars⁶ argued that the recipients were having difficulty, not with their mission theology, but with their theology of the forgiveness of sin. They believed that the Atonement on the Cross was sufficient for all past sins, but were concerned about those which were committed after they became Christians, the kind of sins that in their old Jewish faith were dealt with on the Day of Atonement. Lindars conjectured that they were tempted to return to the Jewish sacrificial system to achieve ease of conscience and that the Epistle was written to encourage them to go forward boldly and confidently in their new faith. Morna Hooker⁷ pictured the recipients as Christians who had already been cut off from Judaism and the Jerusalem temple, either because they had been excommunicated or because they were Diaspora Jews who rarely got to Jerusalem, but who would rather like to ... or perhaps the epistle was written after AD 70 and there was no Jerusalem to go to. So the author assures them, that they have no need of further sacrifice and challenges them to move forward in their Christian faith. Morna Hooker put it very well: 'What need is there for candles, when you have been plugged into the mains?'⁸

⁵ Isaacs 1992 p. 30-31 Isaacs also suggests that the group addressed may be a specialist group, 'a group in training for some form of Christian 'rabbinate''.

⁶ Barnabas Lindars. *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1991) p. 8ff.

⁷ Morna Hooker, *Continuity and Discontinuity: Early Christianity in its Jewish Setting* (London: Epworth. 1986)

⁸ cf. Glaze. 'Introduction to Hebrews.' *Theological Educator* 32 (1985) 20-37 who argued that the purpose of the Epistle was to get the recipients to leave the synagogue and make a complete

In spite of much energy being exerted on the question, therefore, little consensus has emerged on the whereabouts of the recipients and the problems they were facing in their Christian lives.

Genre, Structure and Style

Scholars have long since noticed that while *Hebrews* ends as a letter it begins without the usual epistolary protocol of salutation to readers⁹. This has raised the possibility that either the salutation at the beginning has been lost, or that the greetings at the end have been added by a later hand. Both solutions have been discussed in the period under review. In his earlier commentary in 1991 and in the later one of 1993, Paul Ellingworth suggested tentatively¹⁰ that there may have been a descriptive first leaf glued on to the manuscript and that this leaf was later accidentally detached from the body of the text, or deliberately omitted as inappropriate when the manuscript was copied, though as he himself pointed out, this would have had to have happened very early as there is no manuscript evidence of it.¹¹ As regards the possibility of chapter 13 or parts of it, being an addition by a later hand, Erich Grässer discussed this problem at length and came to the conclusion that, because the author *wanted* the letter to be anonymous, he could not be the writer of the Pauline ending¹²; hence Grässer assumed that the ending was written by a

break with Judaism. Written to a congregation of Jewish Christians at Rome in the late 60's, who were tempted to seek security from imperial persecution in Judaism because of its status as a legal religion.

⁹ See the famous quotation by H. E. Dana, cited by R. E. Glaze, *No Easy Salvation* (Zachary, LA: Insight, 1966) p. 9: 'it begins like a treatise, proceeds like a sermon, and closes like an epistle'.

¹⁰ Ellingworth 1993 p. 61f.

¹¹ F. Renner *An die Hebräer: ein pseudepigraphischer Brief*. (Münsterschwarzach: Vier Türme, 1970) had suggested that Rom 16: 25b, 26. was the lost precept. Against this see Weiss 1991 p. 36.

¹² Grässer 1990 p. 17; 'Allein Jesus Christus wird als exklusive personale Autorität und Ursprungsnorm der Tradition reklamiert.'; A. Vanhoye, 1981 p. 69. Juliana Casey argued that *Hebrews* 13: 19, 22-25 'were probably added at a later date'. (p.

later hand. Hans-Friederich Weiss,¹³ on the other hand, considered whether the ending was added by a later hand in order to give the Epistle a Pauline stamp and came to the conclusion that it must in fact have been added by the author...otherwise the redactor would have added a prescript as well as a postscript. According to Weiss, by adding the greetings in chapter 13 the author was deliberately placing himself in the continuum of primitive Christian tradition. Most commentators, in fact, take the view that Hebrews 13 is from the hand of the author of the rest of the book.¹⁴

Closely related to the status of the ending is the question as to whether this is a general treatise or whether it is addressing a particular situation. Alexander Nairne¹⁵ had argued that even though the popular view of his time was that Hebrews was 'late, artificial, reflective, a treatise rather than a letter, a sermon belonging to an age of sermons. written to a group of scholarly men like the author ...The Epistle smells of the study, not the open air of life where history is being made' that nevertheless it was a serious book, addressing a serious situation and the majority of scholars since then would agree with him. It is addressing a real-life situation¹⁶, though

xiii) though on p. 94f she also said that she is convinced 'the chapter is an integral part of Hebrews.'

¹³ Weiss 1991 p. 746f. He said that this ending is 'nichts anderes als Ergebnis einer bewussten und gezielten Reflexion des Autors des Hebr zu seiner eigenen Stellung in der Kontinuität der urchristlichen Verkündigungsgeschichte..' (747).

¹⁴ eg. Backhaus 1993 p. 192ff., Kistemaker 1984 p. 3f., Vanhoye, *La Structure littéraire de l'Épître aux Hébreux. (StudNeot, 1: Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, (1963);* (he sees two distinct parts 1-13:21 which is a λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως and 13:22-25 which is 'un court billet d'envoi.'; Lane 1991 p.14; Bruce 1990; Bénétreau 1989 vol. 2, p. 207; März 1989 p.; Hagner 1990; Stedman, 1992, p. 149; Wilson 1987, p. 237; Morris 1983 Attridge 1989

¹⁵ A. Nairne, *The Epistle of Priesthood*. Edinburgh. 1913 p. 7

¹⁶ eg. Backhaus 1993 p. 199; Strobel 1991 p. 7 says it is not the 'theologisch-spekulative Werk einer bedeutenden schriftgelehrten Gestalt der Urkirche' but rather a λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως; against H. Köster, *Einführung in das Neue*

as Grässer has pointed out: 'Für ein konkretes Gegenüber ist der Hb eine Spur zu unpersönlich; für ein ideelles Publikum nicht unpersönlich genug'.¹⁷ But this does not solve the problem as to whether it is a letter sent to a community or whether it is a sermon or a treatise. Kistemaker argued that in view of the last chapter it is indeed a letter, it 'is one of the general Epistles of the New Testament'.¹⁸ On the other hand, Grässer did not want to refer to it as a letter, but he considered it to be a 'book', in fact the only one in the NT that has only one theme, that of Christ the true high priest.¹⁹ But if it is more than a letter, then how can one best describe it?

Some scholars have looked to the author himself and his phrase λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως in 13:22²⁰. They have noted that this phrase also occurs in Acts 13:15 in the context of a synagogue service in Antioch of Pisidia, where the phrase seems to refer to a sermon preached to the people, a sermon which consists of both warning and comfort. They argued, therefore, that the phrase, as used in Hebrews refers to all of the epistle, not just the paranetic sections or parts of chapter 13²¹, and may have the semi-technical meaning of a sermon preached in a synagogue.

Whether the term λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως is a semi-technical term or not, however, there is considerable agreement that the book is a homily²², though scholars differ in their definition of

Testament. (Berlin: New York: Walter De Gruyter, 1980) p. 711 who thinks it is a general letter.

¹⁷ Grässer, 'Der Hebräerbrief 1938-1963'. *Theol. Rundschau*. N.F. 30. 1964 p. 149 published again in *Aufbruch und Verheissung* p. 12.

¹⁸ Kistemaker 1984, p. 4

¹⁹ Grässer 1990 p.15

²⁰ cf. In particular Übelacker 1989 pp. 25ff and pp. 210ff and the literature quoted there, especially Roland Bjerkelund, 'PARAKALO' *Bibl. Theol. Norv.* 1 (Oslo, 1967).

²¹ cf. Franck, E, *Revelation Taught. the Paraclete in the Gospel of John* (CB, NT Ser. 14) (Lund: , 1985) p. 32; J. Thurén, *Das Lobopfer der Hebräer. Studien zum Aufbau und Anliegen von Hebräerbrief 13* (Åbo: Åbo Akademie. 1973) 49-56.

²² cf. J. Berger, 'Der Brief an die Hebräer, eine Homilie', in *Göttinger Theol. Bibliothek* iii. 3 (1797) 449-459 for one of the earliest suggestions regarding the genre.

down and sent or whether it is a homily which was meant to be sent in the first place. Among the many scholars who describe it as a homily we would mention Swetnam²³, Grässer²⁴, Weiss 1991²⁵, Lane 1991²⁶, Michel²⁷, Thyen²⁸, Schierse²⁹, Isaacs 1993³⁰ and Vanhoye³¹. The disinclination of some scholars to describe the book

²³ J. Swetnam, 'On the literary genre of the Epistle to the Hebrews'. *NT* 11 (1969). He considered it to be basically a homily, with a few words attached at the end after the manner of a letter. p.216.

²⁴ In his review article p. 153 he thought that the idea that the Jewish-Hellenistic synagogue sermon influenced Hebrews is now *communio opinio* and in his commentary he described it as a 'gesandte Predigt'.

²⁵ Weiss 1991 p. 41 described it as a Lehr-und Mahnschrift, which is in the form of a 'niedergeschriebene Predigt'.

²⁶ Lane 1991 p. lxxv He considered it to be a 'sermon to be read aloud to a group of auditors who will receive its message not primarily through reading and leisured reflection but orally.'

²⁷ Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Hebräer*. 11th. Ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) p. 25 'Hier im Hebr haben wir aber die erste Predigt vor uns, die alle Mittel der antiken rhetorik und sprachformen kennt und ins Christentum überträgt.'

²⁸ H. Thyen, *Der Stil der Jüdisch-Hellenistischen Homilie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955 described Hebrews as the only example of a fully preserved Homily. p. 106. He saw the Epistle as part of the homiletic tradition which had its origin in the synagogue and which can also be detected in all or part of Philo' *Leg. All.*, 4 *Macc.*, 3 *Macc.*, Tobit, Wis.Sol., *Test XII Patr.*, James, Acts 7, *Barn.*, *Hermas* and the *Didache*).

²⁹ F. J. Schierse, *Verheissung und Heilsvollendung. Zur theologischen Grundfrage des Hebräerbriefes*. Münchener theologische Studien, 1:9 (München: Karl Zink Verlag, 1955) p. 206. He described the Epistle as 'schriftlich niedergelegte Homilie'. 'die erste liturgische Predigt.'

³⁰ Isaacs 1993 Described it as a sermon, regardless of what we do with chapter 13.

³¹ A. Vanhoye, *Prêtres anciens, Prêtre nouveau, selon le Nouveau Testament*. (Paris. Editions du Seuil. 1980) tr. by J. Bernard Orchard as *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest* p. 66 'The Epistle to the Hebrews has all the appearance of being an admirably composed homily or sermon.'

as a 'sermon' often stems from their particular definition of a sermon, rather than any fundamental disagreement on the book itself. For example, Rissi³² argued that it could not be described as 'Niederschrift einer Predigt' but then he went on to describe it as consisting 'aus gelehrten, theologischen Meditationen über die Probleme seiner Leser'. Many would be happy to attend a church where the minister took that as the model for his or her sermons.³³ Similarly Windisch in 1931 had described *Hebrews* as a 'erbaulicher Traktat oder ein Vortrag mit brieflichem Schluss' which he understood to be a narrower definition than a homily. If one takes a wide definition of a homily, however, that it is a work addressed to a specific or a typical community to challenge and comfort them, then the general consensus seems to be that *Hebrews* is a 'gesandte Predigt', written by an ἀνὴρ λόγιος, to use Grässer's phrase, using the considerable rhetorical skills at his disposal.

Such a wide definition of a sermon, however, is of very little use in helping scholars to define with any precision the genre of *Hebrews*³⁴ and so attempts have been made to be more precise in assessing how the author uses his rhetorical skills and in discovering which rhetorical model he is following. Spicq had already argued that he was using the model of the classical lecture, opening his work with a πρόθεσις, in which authors chief propositions are stated (Heb 1:1-4, these are recapped at 4:14-16; 8:1-2 and 10:19-22); then following this with a doctrinal introduction, a διήγησις (1:5-6:20) which lead on to the main demonstrative argument, the ἀπόδειξις, a Christological exposition; finally came the epilogue, the ἐπίλογος in

³² Rissi 1987 p. 13.

³³ Weiss 1991 p. 37 called it 'einen theologischen Traktat, eine theologische Abhandlung.'

³⁴ cf. H. Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament* vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), p. 273; Karl Paul Donfried, *The Setting of Second Clement in Early Christianity*, (Leiden: Brill, 1965) p. 26. When speaking about 2 Clement he says 'The basic thrust of this section will be that the term "homily" is so vague and ambiguous that it should be withdrawn until its literary generic legitimacy has been demonstrated.'

12: 14-29. Lawrence Wills³⁵ studied the form of the sermon in Acts 13:14-41, and applied the results of that study to Hebrews, 1 Clement, some sermons in Acts and the Pauline Epistles, other early Christian sources and some Jewish sources and came to the conclusion that there was a discernible pattern in them consisting of *exempla*, conclusion and exhortation. He tentatively suggested a background in Greek rhetorical tradition ... 'Jews and Christians could have learned something of Greek rhetoric in the Hellenist schools ...', but admitted that he was unable to trace the arrangement which he had suggested in conventional Greek rhetoric. In an article appearing four years later, C. Clifton Black³⁶ in a response to Lawrence Wills argued that both the content and the structure of the sermons quoted by Wills (Black concentrated on the primary sermon quoted by Wills, that in Acts 13: 13-41, he did not deal with Hebrews directly) correspond much more closely to Hellenistic rhetoric than Wills allowed. Übelacker³⁷ followed the same lines, arguing that Hebrews belongs fundamentally to the genre of an exhortation, an urgent appeal to his readers, following a practice already established among rhetoricians in Classical antiquity. He demonstrated that chapters 1-2 consist of the *exordium* (1:1-4), the *narratio* (1:5-2:18) with the *propositio* (giving the main problem and question for the entire discourse) in 2:17f.. The *postscriptum* is found in 13:22-25. Attridge³⁸ in his commentary called it an 'epideictic oration' (as opposed to judicial and deliberative orations which usually are concerned with courts and governing bodies

³⁵ Lawrence Wills, 'The form of the sermon in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity', *HTR* 77 (1984) 277-99. Quotation from page 299.

³⁶ C. Clifton Black, 'The Rhetorical Form of the Hellenistic Jewish and early Christian Sermon: a Response to Lawrence Wills', *HTR* 81 (1988) 1-18.

³⁷ Übelacker 1989. P.66ff cf. too H. Thyen, *Der Stil der Jüdisch-Hellenistischen Homilie* (Göttingen: Vandenoëck & Ruprecht, 1955; J. Swetnam, 'On the literary genre of the Epistle to the Hebrews'. *NT* 11 (1969), 261-269. For similar patterns in the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* see John. J. Collins. *Between Athens and Jerusalem* (New York: Crossroad. 1983) 158-159.

³⁸ Attridge 1989 p. 14.

respectively) 'celebrating the significance of Christ and inculcating values that his followers ought to share'. Clearly this is a field of research that will be expanded greatly in the coming decades.

In the eighties too progress has been made in defining more precisely the structure of Hebrews with Vanhoye³⁹, Dussaut⁴⁰, Feld⁴¹, Ellingworth⁴², Weiss⁴³, März⁴⁴; Übelacker⁴⁵, Attridge⁴⁶, Cosby⁴⁷, Lane⁴⁸ making important contributions. There have also been several articles written on the theme by Black⁴⁹; Ebert⁵⁰, Lindars⁵¹, MacLeod⁵², Meier⁵³, Rice⁵⁴ and Swetnam⁵⁵ and while there is certainly no consensus about the structure itself, there does

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- 39 Vanhoye 1989
 40 Dussaut 1981
 41 Feld 1985 23-29
 42 Ellingworth 1993 p. 50-58
 43 Weiss 1991 p. 42-51.
 44 März 1989 p. 14-18
 45 Übelacker 1989 p. 40-48
 46 Attridge 1989 p. 14-20
 47 Cosby 1988. He studied the rhetorical structure of Hebrews 11.
 48 Lane 1991 p. lxxiv-xcviii. Lane (p. xcff) also drew attention to an unpublished dissertation by G. H. Guthrie, *The Structure of Hebrews: a textlinguistic analysis*. Unpublished dissertation, Southwestern Baptist theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, 1991.
 49 Black, D. A. 'The Problem of the Literary Structure of Hebrews: An Evaluation and a Proposal'. *GraceTheolJourn* 7 (1986) 163-177 and 'A note on the structure of Hebrews 12: 1-2'. *Biblica* 68 (1987), 543-551.
 50 Ebert, D. John. 'The Chiastic Structure of the Prologue in Hebrews,' *TrinJournal* 13 (1992) 163-179.
 51 Lindars, B, 'The Rhetorical Structure of Hebrews.' *NTStud* 35 (1989), 382-406.
 52 MacLeod, D. John. 'The Literary Structure of the book of Hebrews.' *Bibliotheca Sacra* 146 (1989), 185-197.
 53 Meier, J. P, 'Structure and theology in Heb 1:1-14. *Biblica* 66 (1985) 168-189
 54 Rice, G. E. 'The Chiastic structure of the central section of the Epistle to the Hebrews.' *AndUnivSemStud* 19 (1981) 243-246.
 55 Swetnam, J. 'The Structure of Hebrews 1: 1-3:6,' *MelTheol* 43 (1992) 58-66.

seem to be a growing consensus on the methodology to be used in determining a structure.

Date

Very little progress has been made in the eighties and early nineties on the question of date. There seems to be a fairly widespread consensus that 96 CE. is the *Terminus ad quem* for the writing of the Epistle, because 1 Clement writing from Rome to Corinth on that date, is dependent on the Epistle. It is generally agreed that 1 Clem 36: 2-5 is dependent on Hebrews 1: 3-13; 1 Clem 17:1 on Heb 11:37 and 1 Clem 17:5 on Heb 3:5. But even that is not certain. There have been those who have questioned whether Clement is dependent on Hebrews or whether they simply both followed a common Christian tradition⁵⁶, though apart from a mention in Attridge (cf. previous note n. 56) that debate has not surfaced in the period under review. Moreover, the date 96 for 1 Clement is not written in stone. It simply is an estimate based on internal evidence in the Epistle. The assumption is that 1 Clement 1:1 with its reference to 'the sudden and repeated misfortunes and calamities which have befallen us' refers to the persecutions towards the end of the reign of Domitian (81-96) and so 1 Clement is dated towards the end of that reign, in 96 CE. As Attridge, however, pointed out in his commentary⁵⁷, the date of 1 Clement and so the *terminus ad quem* of the writing of Hebrews could really be

⁵⁶ cf. G. Theissen *Untersuchungen zum Hebräerbrief*. Studien zum N.T. Band 2. (Gütersloh:Mohn, 1969) and K. Beyschlag *Clemens Romanus und der Fröhhkatholismus*, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1966).. Against them Cockerill, G.L., 'Hebr. 1:1-14, 1 Clem 36:1-6 and the High Priest Title.' *JBL* 97 (1978, 437-440); Hagner, D. A., *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* Nov.Test.Suppl. 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1973) who thinks that 1 Clement's dependence on Hebrews 'seems certain'; Paul Ellingworth, 'Hebrews and 1 Clement: Literary Dependence or Common Tradition,' *BZ* 23 (1979) 262-69; M. Mees, 'Die Hohepriester-theologie des Hebräerbriefes im Vergleich mit dem Ersten Clemensbrief' *BZ NF* 22 (1978) 115-124; Braun 1984 p. 3; Attridge 1989 p.6f.

⁵⁷ Attridge 1989 p. 7.

anywhere between 70 and 140, though he favours between 90 and 120. A further hint as to a *Terminus ad quem* might be given by the mention of Timothy. If this is the Timothy mentioned in connection with the Apostle Paul, then it is unlikely he would still be alive after the turn of the century.⁵⁸

The other date that scholars have depended on to date the Epistle is the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. Two characteristics of the Epistle are noted in this regard. Firstly, that the sacrificial cult is described in the present tense, and secondly that the author who is arguing that the cult is no longer efficacious for Salvation, does not use the argument that it has actually been destroyed by the Romans. Hence, the conclusion is that the epistle must have been written before A. D. 70⁵⁹. This evidence, however, is of very doubtful value. Firstly, there is no real evidence that sacrifices did stop definitely in Jerusalem after the Roman attack in A.D.70 .. they may have continued in a much reduced form until the Revolt of Bar Kochba in 135, which finally put an end to all Jewish cultic activity in Rome.⁶⁰ Secondly, Jewish and Jewish-Christian literature, such as 1 Clement 40: 4-5., Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* and *Against Apion* 2.77. as well as Mishnaic documents, which we know were written after the destruction of Jerusalem, nevertheless refer to the activity of the temple cult in the present tense, as does

⁵⁸ Attridge 1989 p. 9.

⁵⁹ A large number of commentators of our period take this view: Leon Morris 1983 p. 12, Donald Hagner 1990, Donald Guthrie 1990, Strobel 1991 (p. 11 'die Tatsache, dass mit keinem Wort der katastrophalen Einschnitt des Jahres 70 n.Chr. erwähnt ist oder sonstwie in den Blick gerät, lässt u.E. nur eine Datierung vor 70 n.Chr. zu'; he also considered that 6:10 refers to the Jerusalem collection), Sören-Ruager 1987, Barnabas Lindars 1991 p. 20. Vanhoye in his book *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest* tr. by Bernard Orchard (Petersham, Mass: St. Bede's Publications, 1986) p. 66 n. 5 suggested the last years of Nero's reign, that is towards the end of the sixties; Hugedé 1983 p. 216, n. 17. William Lane 1991 also argues for a date around 64 (p. lxvi), but considers that the destruction of the Temple is irrelevant for discussion of the date (p. lxiii)

⁶⁰ cf. Clark, K. W., 'Worship in the Jerusalem Temple after A.D.70'. *NTS* 6 (1969-70) 269-80

Hebrews.⁶¹ Thirdly, there would have been an expectation that the Temple would (eventually) be rebuilt, as it was after the First Exile, hence any argument based on its destruction would have been temporary. The author's point is that Christ's sacrifice has destroyed for ever the efficacy of the Temple sacrifices. The destruction of the Temple cannot, therefore, be used with any certainty to date the Epistle.

Other criteria are equally uncertain; the fact that the church according to 2:7 was second generation at least, that in 13:5 it seemed to be succumbing to temptations usually associated with established churches; that at least some of its leaders have died (13:7) .. all these criteria are too vague to allow us to pinpoint a date with any certainty. In view of all these uncertainties, there has been no unanimity in the period under review on the part of scholars regarding the dating of the Epistle. Many wished to date the Epistle before 70 C.E.⁶² Other scholars placed it between 70 and 100, For example, Raymond Brown⁶³ placed it between 75 and 90; S. J. Kistemaker put it in the early eighties. Weiss⁶⁴, Grässer⁶⁵, Hegermann⁶⁶, März⁶⁷; Braun⁶⁸ and Rissi⁶⁹ between 80 and 96. Clearly, scholarship in the eighties and early nineties, has not solved the problem of the date of the Epistle!

Conclusion

It has been impossible in such a short article to do more than touch on a few of the issues raised in the study of Hebrews in the past thirteen years⁷⁰. In particular, the important theological issues

⁶¹ cf. Brown 1983 p. 150 for details.

⁶² cf. note 59.

⁶³ Brown 1983 p. 151

⁶⁴ Weiss 1991 p. 77

⁶⁵ Grässer 1990 p. 25

⁶⁶ Hegermann 1988 p. 11 (Around 80)

⁶⁷ März 1989 p. 20

⁶⁸ Braun 1984 p.3.

⁶⁹ Rissi 1987 p. 13.

⁷⁰ Among some of the excellent monographs written on particular topics but not mentioned in the text. cf. Loader 1981. Kobelski

raised in the Epistle, will have to be dealt with in a later article. Concerning the issues that have been raised, however, while it is true that on some of them, particularly the questions of authorship, date and provenance very little new light has been shed, on others, such as the intellectual background of the author and the genre, structure and purpose of the Epistle, there has been a very profitable debate. However, it is probably for the abundance of exegetical comment that the 80s and early 90s will be remembered. Twenty years ago ministers could perhaps have been forgiven for neglecting Hebrews in the pulpit with the excuse that exegetical resources on Hebrews were few and far between; now, however, that excuse is no longer tenable. In view of the excellent commentaries that have appeared, not to mention the hundreds of exegetical articles on individual verses or themes, preachers must be challenged to turn this abundance of exegetical help and stimulus into their own λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως for their congregations.

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1981, Hagen 1981, Swetnam 1981, Peterson 1982, Feld 1985, Lehne 1990, Scholer 1991, Dunnill 1992.

WILLIAM KING, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

R. Buick Knox

William King was born in Antrim in 1650; his parents were Scots from Aberdeenshire.¹ By 1650 the Irish Rebellion had been finally crushed by the forces of Cromwell and, under his plans, presbyterian ministers were once again able to become ministers in parish churches. Here, they tried to carry out their ministry on presbyterian lines. Some of them were deeply attached to the Scottish Covenants and they tried to make their people take an oath to accept the Solemn League and Covenant. Some Scots objected to the hostility shown in the Covenant to the Scottish House of Stuart and they refused to take the oath. According to William, his father refused to take the oath and the minister was so annoyed that William's baptism was delayed for six months.²

William recalled that he was a very slow learner and was for long unable to distinguish the letters in words or to associate them with their sound. For this, he received many whippings. He was presumably what would now be called dyslexic. In particular, he could not recognize the words in the Shorter Catechism which was the basis of instruction in presbyterian homes and which he was expected to learn. Then, a sympathetic lady teacher gave him help and, suddenly, sounds and print came together; thereafter he became a zealous reader. Looking back upon his early years, he felt that the educational methods combined the severity of teachers with their inability to teach.³

In his own account of his life, he indicates that his family had moved to County Tyrone and that he attended Dungannon Royal School, though the school records do not contain his name. He said that in his first year of study of Latin he was as ignorant at the end

¹ A Great Archbishop of Dublin: William King, 1650-1729 (His Autobiography, Family, and a selection from his correspondence, ed. Sir Charles Simeon King, hereafter referred to as 'King'), p. 49

² King, 1-2

³ *Ibid*, 3

as at the beginning of term; it was only after three years that he began to improve.⁴

In 1667 he entered Trinity College, Dublin. He had difficulty in paying his way; his family could give him little support, but his hardships were eased when his tutor, Charles Cormas, secured his election as a scholar.⁵ In Trinity he was surrounded by the Anglican ethos and he came under the influence of the worship and order of that tradition.⁶ He claimed that in 1669 a new tutor, John Christian, 'imbued him with a true sense of religion'.⁷

Trinity had its attractions as a gateway to education and opportunity, just as, at a later time, Lampeter in Wales offered openings to many non-conformists and drew many of them into the ministry of the episcopal Church. Such transfers were unusual in Ireland where Presbyterians did not think of themselves as non-conformists but as offshoots of the Church of Scotland.

As a migrant into the Anglican Church, King tended to portray his times in Presbyterianism in the gloomiest colours; he said he had known nothing sacred and did not know that the duty of prayer was incumbent upon him until he entered Trinity College. He admitted that his father conducted family worship and read the Scriptures, but his prayers contained words and phrases William did not grasp; a dictionary would have been needed to define them, but he added condescendingly that all this was typical of what he now called 'the sect'.⁸

His tutor now taught him to ask God's help and 'to consider his glory and service before all things'. He 'determined with myself to examine religion from its foundation' and to study natural and revealed religion and the Christian religion in all its branches and he noted that as a result he came to a happy conclusion from which he never wavered.⁹

He took his B.A. degree in 1670 but in 1672 he failed to secure a Fellowship. In 1673 he took his M.A. degree and he was

⁴ Ibid, 4-5

⁵ Ibid, 7

⁶ Ibid, 8

⁷ Ibid, 9

⁸ Ibid, 9-10

⁹ Ibid, 11-12

ordained deacon by Bishop Mossom of Derry. He was chosen by Archbishop Parker of Tuam to be his chaplain. Parker ordained him to the priesthood and provided him with a prebend and eight vicarages; all this gave him a stipend of £60 yearly.¹⁰ As chaplain, he was introduced to new and strange ways of life with household comforts, a variety of wines and copious dinners with sixteen courses; by 1675 he was having the first spasms of the gout which was to trouble him for the rest of his life; he died of a sudden attack in 1729.¹¹

He was not stretched by his work as chaplain. He admitted he wasted time on trifles, but, being reproved by the archbishop, he made amends by studies from before midnight until two in the morning. In his own estimate, these night hours with the Fathers were not conducted with proper diligence.¹²

In 1678, his archbishop became archbishop of Dublin and he appointed King in the following year to be rector of St Werburgh's in Dublin, to which was added the chancellorship of St Patrick's Cathedral. As rector, he became noted for his regular work, his care for the sick and his catechising of the ignorant. He continued his studies, though these were much hampered by his gout.¹³ He got his first taste of controversy when he replied to a pamphlet by Peter Manby, a former dean of Derry who had become a Roman Catholic. The pamphlet, 'Considerations' set forth his reasons for his change. King replied in 'Answer to the Considerations'; this led to a reply by Manby and a counter-reply by King in which he diverged to attack the Presbyterians who were numerous in Derry. This brought a presbyterian minister in Dublin, Joseph Boyce, into the controversy.¹⁴ King had thus shown his deep aversion to the Presbyterians and this was to remain a permanent strand in his outlook.

¹⁰ Ibid, 13; this largesse was due to the scarcity of clergy and to the malpractice of appropriation

¹¹ King, 14

¹² He secured the degrees of B.D. and D.D. in 1688

¹³ King, 16-18

¹⁴ Boyce, Works, II, 48-66; A.W.G.Brown, *The Great Mr Boyce* (Presbyterian Historical Society, Ireland, 1980)

In 1683, he took the waters in Tunbridge Wells. While in England, he noted with disapproval the criticism of the monarchy but he admitted that this arose from anxiety about what would happen if the Roman Catholic James were to succeed Charles on the throne. He was therefore not surprised at the eventual turn of events leading to the flight of James from England and the landing of William of Orange to claim the throne. This caused much trouble of conscience to many who had taken the Oath of Allegiance to James. King held that this had not given James absolute power to change the constitution and repeal Acts establishing Protestantism. He therefore agreed with those who supported the accession of William.¹⁵

In January 1689 King was appointed to be Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. It was at this time that King James came to Ireland to make his last stand. Many rural clergy fled to Dublin. This enabled the churches in Dublin to be provided with ministers. In the deserted rural parishes, Roman Catholic priests took over the churches. This even happened in some Dublin parishes and Anglican clergy had to conduct services in private houses. The authorities in Dublin were still obedient to James and they arrested and imprisoned King as a probable supporter of William and 'a dangerous man', but eventually since no evidence of treasonable acts could be produced, he was released. He was arrested again in June 1690 but was released as soon as William was victorious at the Boyne. In a celebratory sermon in St Patrick's Cathedral he welcomed William's victory as 'our deliverance'¹⁶ He urged that those defeated by William should not be treated inhumanely. He later felt that the failure to treat them mercifully, as the Treaty of Limerick had hoped, was a lost opportunity to win many of the Irish to the Reformed Church.¹⁷

As might be expected, King was soon rewarded for his support of William who nominated him to be the Bishop of Derry. This was one of the richest bishoprics in Ireland, being worth £1200 annually. He was consecrated in January 1691 and he proved himself to be an assiduous and competent bishop in an area ravaged by

¹⁵ King, 19-20

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 25-28, 92, 98

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 29

recent battles. He was well aware of the task which awaited him; he prepared a valuable report on 'The State of the Protestants' in which he catalogued their sorry plight. Archbishop Tillotson commended this work to King William as a useful guide in forming government policy in Ireland. It was also praised by Gilbert Burnet, bishop and historian.¹⁸ This work also repeated King's reasons for supporting William's claim to the throne. It drew criticism from the Jacobite, Charles Leslie of Glaslough, who held that support for William was a clear breach of the oath to James. King replied that an oath depended upon mutual faithfulness and James had broken his part of the bargain by breaking his promise to maintain the constitution and the Church; subjects were therefore no longer bound to him and William could be accepted. King believed that most Protestants took this position and that there were few Jacobites among them.¹⁹

King resided in his diocese and sought to recover the Church's resources so as to improve the pay of the clergy. He pressed the clergy to reside in their parishes or at least to give sufficient to pay curates during their absence; in his view, absentee clergy preferred 'the clergyman's ease to the salvation of the people'.²⁰ He got all the neglected and ruined churches repaired and he urged the clergy to live sober lives and be diligent among the people. He said his practice was to test candidates for preferments, to look for those who had experience as curates, and to promote those who had done well in smaller parishes.²¹ In his visitations of the parishes he found many Presbyterians. Mant says King set himself to counteract what Mant calls 'this evil'. King said some of them attended his visitations for business or out of curiosity and he appealed to them to conform. Some of them did. He detested the idea of non-conformity but he himself treated these people as misguided rather than as evil people. Within the diocese they were a strong body and he advised the clergy to get to know them and encourage them to conform.

¹⁸ Ibid, 30, 78, 296-7; Mant, R., *History of the Church of Ireland* (London, 1840) (hereafter 'Mant'), II, 125-6, 277

¹⁹ Mant, II, 79

²⁰ Ibid. II, 13

²¹ King, 282

He was annoyed with presbyterian claims to be strong champions of Scripture as the norm of Christian teaching and worship and practice. In reply, he wrote 'The Inventions of men in the worship of God.' He held there was more use of Scripture in the services of his Church than in presbyterian services. No doubt, with two lessons, at least one Psalm, the Lord's Prayer, and various Scripture sentences, this was and is often the case. He held that the use of 'grave musical instruments' in worship was not an unscriptural invention, as Presbyterians asserted, but was a help to regulate voices of those that sing, especially in northern counties where, in his view, people's voices were 'generally more harsh and untuneable than in other places.' Yet, his arguments are often debatable; for example, he said that if God had intended people to sing metrical psalms, as Presbyterians did, he would have inspired the original writers to write in verse; since he did not do so, the Church of Ireland had sure warrant for singing them in prose. Boyce, who had already crossed swords with King, replied in 'Remarks on the Inventions.' He objected particularly to King's claim that, contrary to the biblical command, Presbyterians had infrequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper; he said this was due to the persecuting activity of King's denomination. King replied, repeating many of his accusations in 'An Admonition to the Dissenters in the Diocese of Derry.' He said Boyce had used all the devices the defenders of a bad case were accustomed to use. Boyce replied in 'A Vindication of the Remarks.' J.S.Reid, the presbyterian historian, says King's writings were 'a clever and plausible performance', written in 'a spirit of affected friendship' but full of 'unworthy insinuations and unfounded charges'.²²

Writing to Archbishop Narcissus Marsh of Dublin after a round of visitations in 1701, King said he had entertained crowds of dissenters with a discourse showing there was no need for their separation; the Church of Ireland was based on the teaching of

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Ibid, 36, 39-40, 2889; Reid, J.S, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* (ed. W.D. Killen), III, 27; Boyce, *Works: Remarks on Inventions*, II, 46-122 ; *Vindication of the Remarks*, 123-148. On the title page of *King* there is a quotation ascribed to King, 'Religion that leads to despise the Word destroys Salvation'.

Scripture. He made the same point in a letter to Bishop Ashe of Clogher and said it was a sin to make a needless sect. Mant holds that King's attitude to dissenters was marked by 'gentle and Christian reasoning', 'free from all bitterness of spirit' and none had been able to 'invalidate its truth'!²³

King also questioned the firmness of the attachment of the Presbyterians to their faith and practice; he claimed that from his experience they were ignorant of both and had slight acquaintance with their own Catechism and with the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments; he even asserted that only one in ten of the Scots frequented their meeting-houses. This was likely an over-gloomy picture, but presbyterian ministers often spoke of the difficulty of teaching and disciplining their people. King also admitted that many of his own people were far from being paragons of faith and practice.

King was irritated by the encouragement given to the Presbyterians by bodies who ought to have sapped their strength. The London Society owned large tracts of land and had many Scots settled thereon. King went to London to urge the Society to give more support to his Church, but he found the Society firm in its support of the Scots as diligent and stable tenants.²⁴

King was also dissatisfied with the grant, the *Regium Donum*, given by William to the Scots for the stipends of their ministers, but, 'if it is thought fit to continue the Fund to them', it should be allocated by the government to each qualifying minister and not given as a lump to be distributed as the Synod's agent decided; this method put each minister at the mercy of the trustees who allocated the Fund to favour the founding of new churches and placing ministers therein.²⁵ In later years many ministers did feel they were at the mercy of the agent who administered the Fund.

King was opposed to including in any Toleration Act a clause giving dissenters the right to be appointed to any 'offices of Power'. Presbyterians complained against their exclusion from appointment as magistrates but King consistently voted in the Irish

²³ Mant. II. 14-16

²⁴ King, 35. 276

²⁵ Mant. II. 125-6

Parliament against any concession; this was something to which he said no Churchman could consent.

King held there was a place for the Irish language; he thus revived the policy of Bishop Bedell who in the previous century, in opposition to Archbishop Ussher, had sought to provide Irish Bibles and Irish Books of Common Prayer for the use of those whose first language was Irish. The government in Dublin feared that encouragement of the Irish Language would weaken the English interest. Nevertheless, when Highland Scots settled in Donegal, he appointed two Irish-speaking ministers, one to a benefice and one supported by himself. Some of the native Irish attended the services and he held that they were more likely to be won to Protestantism by such methods.²⁶ He also encouraged the study of Irish in Trinity College. However, this did not win wide support.

According to Mant, he found that many did not want Roman Catholics brought into the Church of Ireland as instructed and willing members but as members like themselves with little sense of religion!²⁷ Nor was he moved by arguments that the native Roman Catholics were so alienated by the Penal Laws that no overtures were likely to win a response and that there was no way forward until there was a measure of toleration. He held that they could not be given the full benefits of citizenship because, due to their relationship with the Pope, they could not give a guarantee of loyalty to the Crown. Yet, in practice, King held they were not to be, and were not, oppressed; despite the Penal Laws, King could claim that they 'lived happily'; there was liberty of conscience by 'connivance, though not by law'.

In 1702, William died and was succeeded by Anne. King hoped she would keep the law; if she did, she would be as happy as any of her predecessors; 'we universally loved William as our deliverer', but Anne was still an unknown figure. As James II's daughter, she would have to walk carefully.

In 1703 King was translated to the archbishopric of Dublin. When he left Derry, an Irish member of Parliament, according to Swift, said King left a people who acknowledged his wisdom,

²⁶ Ibid, II, 228-9; King, 291-5, 297

²⁷ Mant, II, 17

hospitality and charity, his diligence in building churches, and his preferring of persons worthy of preferment on their own merits. Swift said that even the Presbyterians regretted his departure, for, though firm in his principles, he had treated them with indulgence, wisdom and goodness, but it may be granted that here Swift was writing with the latitude of the obituarist.²⁸

In Dublin, he was much afflicted by attacks of gout. He went to London in 1704 for treatment and on Church business. He went again in 1705 and had much trouble in deciding whether he should hire a Sedan chair or a coach with a coachman and two horses; the coach would not be much dearer and would be more creditable to an archbishop. He had been at Tunbridge without any great advantage from the waters. He intended to go to Bath. He felt he could not be back in Ireland until January 1706. Before returning, he decided to buy four horses, though he thought he might need seven; in fact he bought eight. He postponed the purchase of a carriage until his return to Dublin. He seems by times to have continued to ride on horseback but in 1713 he had a fall and his Dean, by now Jonathan Swift, advised him to cease; 'it is', said Swift, 'one of the chief advantages of a great station that one is exempt from common accidents of this kind; the late King indeed got a fall, but his Majesty was a fox-hunter; I question whether you can plead any pretext to excuse you'²⁹

When King became Archbishop, Swift was one of the clergy of the diocese. He was known as a brilliant and caustic writer who alienated many by his words. He was the rector of the small living of Laracor to which was added a prebend in St Patrick's Cathedral. At Laracor, he rebuilt the rectory, planted trees and formed a garden. He made various visits to London and importuned many in the hope of preferment to a higher office for which he rightly believed he was qualified. He became ever more bitter as people whom he believed had good cause to help him failed to do so. He besought favour from King. He and King had some affinity as men of learning and a shared aversion to the devices of politicians. Yet, there were grounds for tension. Swift resented the Archbishop's claim to have a right to visit

²⁸ Mant, II, 498; King, 277.

²⁹ King, 114, 165

the Cathedral as Visitor and to oversee its ways. King frowned upon Swift's use of his gifts to ridicule people in high office; if nothing else, this blocked his hopes of preferment.

Swift wanted an English bishopric, but his writings, especially his 'Tale of a Tub', seemed to ridicule religion and led some to think he was an infidel. When discussing episcopal appointments with the Queen, her favourite archbishop, Sharp of York, advised her that in appointing a bishop she should be sure the man was a Christian. King was not against Swift-elevation. He told him to push his own case before he was too old; he should produce some serious work which would be 'profitable and agreeable above most things that pass the press'. He was sure Swift had 'the learning and happy turn of mind' to do so. Swift was irritated by this advice: King should have given him 'some hopes and promises'.³⁰ After a visit to Windsor, Swift wrote to King expressing his disappointment that many who had it in their power to help him had not done so; he knew there were men of transcendent merit who would rise to the top in any situation; the annoyance was that at lower levels men with second and third rate abilities were overtaken by knaves and dunces who had impudence and flattery. King again urged Swift to waste no time on his bitter thoughts but to produce a work useful to himself and the Church; he should make haste since 'after fifty both body and mind decay'; 'let the world see what your genius can do'.³¹ He advised against attacks on Harley and the Tory government; it made people in England think the gentlemen of Ireland were 'a pack of desperate Whigs' ready to rise against the Queen.³² He took particular exception to a pamphlet attacking a recent governor, the Earl of Wharton; Swift may have been the author, though King was probably unaware of this; he thought Parliament should curb such licentious criticism.

King, however, was no uncritical observer of rulers. He admitted that Wharton, who was indeed a cruel expander of the Penal Laws, may have been guilty of ill behaviour for which, if

³⁰ Ibid, 141-3

³¹ King, 147; Jonathan Swift, *Correspondence* (ed. Harold Williams, O.U.P. 1963) I., 254, 267-8

³² King, 126

proved true, he should be punished rather than be assailed in anonymous tracts. King held that the Earl of Anglesey should have been impeached. He confessed to Swift, 'I reckon that any chief governor who is sent here comes with a design to serve first those who sent him, and our good only must be considered as it is subservient to the main design'.³³ Lord-Lieutenants were often birds of passage who, in King's view, brought their English chaplains who during their brief stay they pushed into bishoprics and the best preferments; this gave little encouragement to clergy educated in Ireland. Swift agreed with this assessment; clergy without interest, property or acquaintance save that of being chaplains to governors were appointed to the chief offices; this also applied in the civil sphere. In the hunt for positions, King said 'ill men would engross the best places by their assiduity'.³⁴ There were, however, some governors who recognized King's quality. The Duke of Grafton, writing in 1723, said King was 'an uncommon mixture', at times indiscreet in action and expression with wild notions that sometimes make him impracticable in business, but 'usually well-affected to the King and an utter enemy of the Pretender and his cause; he is charitable, hospitable, a despiser of riches and an excellent bishop, for which reason he has generally the love of the country and a great influence and sway over the clergy and bishops who are natives'.³⁵

In 1713, Swift informed King of his election to be the Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral. His ambitions had been set on higher office; he referred to his new position as 'the small station in which I am placed'; he hoped he would have King's support. King told the Archbishop of Canterbury that Swift's friends were agreed that the deanery was a position better suited to Swift's temperament than a bishopric; 'a Dean could do less mischief than a Bishop'. He told Swift that while he was sorry to see his old friend, Sterne, so far removed, he would welcome Swift as a friend. Henceforth their lives were even more closely thrown together in smooth and rough times.³⁶

³³ Ibid. 139

³⁴ King, 283; Mant. II. 67; Swift. *Correspondence*. I. 259ff

³⁵ King, 276

³⁶ Ibid. 151-2. 195-6; Swift. *Correspondence*. I. 353.

King now went to Bath for treatment. He told Swift he hoped to visit London before returning but so many Irish bishops and clergy were already there hunting for preferments, especially to four vacant bishoprics, that he was ashamed to be seen among them. It would be a shame if those who stayed at home and attended to their cures were passed over for those who attended the Court and neglected their duties. He was much disturbed by the state of some dioceses in his province. In the one hundred and thirty one parishes in the diocese of Ferns there were only thirteen beneficed clergy and nine poor curates.³⁷

A further change in circumstances was the death of Anne and the accession of the Hanoverian George. This disturbed some clergy who regretted the fading of the Stuart star and the rising of George's Lutheran star. King had no such qualms. He held that the Lutheran Augsburg Confession laid less stress upon the doctrine of election and predestination than did the Calvinist tradition; the Lutherans had a good liturgy, sometimes called the Mass and also akin to the order in the Book of Common Prayer. King was sure George would have no scruple about conforming to the ways of the Church of England.³⁸

King's loyalty to the new regime was recognised by his appointment to be a Lord-Justice during absences of the Lord-Lieutenant in England. He did not relish the appointment; it diverted him from his episcopal duties; moreover, the Lord-Justices could not initiate new policies but they got the blame for the evil they could not prevent. However, the appointment did let him see the ill results of appointments in both Church and State without due consideration of local needs.³⁹ He submitted to the Archbishop of Canterbury lists of native clergy whom he considered fit for promotion, but he had little hope they would be appointed. In July 1716 he was again in Bath for treatment; he was there until September and then went to London in an attempt to influence episcopal appointments. He was still there in January 1717 and lamented that appointments were following the

³⁷ King, 148, 161; W.E.H. Lecky, *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, I, 202.

³⁸ King, 162, 165-

³⁹ *Ibid*, 170-1

many years and voted for the continuation of the law requiring subscription to some of the Thirty-nine Articles as a condition of full citizenship. Eventually, the wall of resistance began to crumble when the House of Lords voted with the government. King lamented that this result came when five English-born bishops voted with the majority. King lamented even this modest relief. He held it was now possible for Jews, Turks, Deists and Pagans and others to set up as teachers if they simply took the oath of allegiance. He said bishops would now have to inform the clergy that the Acts gave 'a full liberty to all sects to set up their meetings and propagate what doctrines they please'. Nothing could now prevent this; the Church would have to 'depend on God's care and providence over his Church, and the means and methods Christ has left us to support religion' With unusual realism he confessed this would be more effective than all temporal motives and assistance.⁴⁶

The Primate, Lindsay of Armagh, died in 1724. King was not appointed to succeed him. He recognized he was lame and aged and without sufficient vigour. He knew he had aroused many enemies by his probing into abuses in Church and State, but he claimed he had brought the Dublin diocese to 'a pretty good regularity'; if he left for Armagh, he would be sorry to see Dublin turned 'topsy-turvey' as had happened after he left Derry for Dublin. Swift hoped King would be offered the office, probably because he knew the worth of King, but also probably in part because the appointment would remove his claim to visit the Cathedral. King said that, if offered, he would accept but he could not now begin to do what he had done in Dublin. It was not to be.⁴⁷

Hugh Boulter, an Englishman, was appointed. Though not personally an unworthy man, he was totally committed to advancing the English control of the Church. He pointed out to the Duke of Newcastle the importance of getting an English bishop to succeed King whenever his position became vacant; it was 'vital to break the present Dublin faction on the Bench of bishops.'⁴⁸ When

⁴⁶ Mant. II, 342, 357; Swift. *Correspondence*, I. III

⁴⁷ King, 247-9; Lecky. *op.cit.*, I. 445; Swift. *Correspondence*, III, 20

⁴⁸ Mant. II. 419

Archbishop Palliser of Tuam died in 1726 Boulter strongly opposed the candidature of Bolton who was in King's circle and had been translated from Clonfert to Elphin. Bolton was supported by the King and by Lord Carteret, the Lord-Lieutenant, and by Connolly, the influential Speaker of the House of Commons, but Boulter said he was 'a dangerous Irishman' Eventually, the English Godwin, Bishop of Kilmore, was appointed. His brief tenure ended with his death in 1729 and King lived just long enough to see Bolton appointed.⁴⁹

King's oversight of his diocese remained keen to the end. In 1728, he was still making plans for four new churches in Dublin. His increasing weakness made him realize his work was almost done. Yet, he sensed there would be twenty English contenders for his position and it was therefore his duty to look after his health and stay alive as long as possible. In 1728 he had a severe attack of gout which affected his hand and he had to have an amanuensis. He was in his seventy-ninth year and he was very weak. He wrote movingly to Bishop Maule of Cloyne about suggestions that the time had come for him to retire: 'I can by no means be of the opinion that I have done my work or that I should rest from my labours. Saint Paul has set me a better example who, after he had laboured a thousand times better than I and to much better purpose, yet did not reckon upon what was past but pressed forward to the obtaining of the prize for which he laboured. There is no stopping in this course till God calls us from it by death. I would have you propose no other example but Saint Paul himself and compare the progress you make to his'.⁵⁰

Writing to Bishop Howard of Killaloe, he said he was beginning to creep about after the attack of gout but he had to seek help in fulfilling his duties and people did not comply so readily with his helpers as they had with himself. The diocese was in reasonable order but he sensed it was far from what it ought to be.

Through the years of his episcopate he had kept up his studies. He would have liked to produce something of lasting value, as he had advised Swift to do. His most impressive work was a Latin treatise, *De Origine Mali*, published in 1701. Here he dealt with the

⁴⁹ King, 256; Mant, II, 450-463

⁵⁰ King, 265; Mant, II, 497

age-long issues of freewill, election and predestination; he wrestled with the difficulty of reconciling the existence of evil with belief in an omnipotent and beneficent Deity. The book caught the attention of Bayle, Leibnitz and Wolff; they gave it serious and critical attention. It was translated into English by Bishop Law of Carlisle. Peter Browne, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, told King he thought the work could have been abbreviated. He thought King had reversed the proper order of his argument; he said the idea of liberty had arisen after evil was done, but, in Browne's view, evil was what was done by people with the freewill which as intelligent creatures they already possessed; they chose to do evil.⁵¹

King also contributed papers to the Dublin Philosophical Society and to the Dublin Society of which he was a Fellow. He encouraged the clergy to continue their studies. He inaugurated a Lecturership in Divinity in Trinity College and strengthened it by a further bequest in his will. The Archbishop King's Professorship continued until recent times. King was classed as the most notable Irish episcopal scholar since Ussher.⁵²

When he died in 1729, there were many tributes to his life and work. The 'Dublin Gazette' saluted him as a patriot and friend of his country.⁵³ He died as he lived, giving his possessions mostly for charitable purposes, reserving only his worldly chattels to cover the expense of his funeral. He asked that nothing be spent on any monument. His bequests to charities amounted to £17,000.

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⁵¹ King, 40, 90, 120

⁵² Ibid, 45, 303

⁵³ Ibid, 313

F. GERALD DOWNING :Cynics and Christian Origins (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1992) xii + 377pp. ISBN 0 567 09613 0

Until quite recently it was possible to find standard works on Hellenistic philosophy which either totally ignored Cynicism, the radical ethically-based approach to life associated with the ascetic Diogenes of Sinope (*fl.* 350 B.C.), or mentioned it only in passing. The reasons for this past neglect are not hard to find: we lack the original writings (if indeed there were any) of the early Cynics; the evidence we have for their views is scattered, difficult to interpret, and often transmitted through hostile channels; moreover, it is clear that the Cynics were extremely varied individuals, toeing no party line. Unlike other schools of philosophy, Cynicism had no academic superstructure, and for the most part rejected with scorn the religious beliefs and practices of its time; it has therefore often failed to attract the interest and sympathy of modern philosophers grounded in logic, epistemology, and metaphysics, or of theologians. Moreover, many of the views and actions attributed to ancient Cynics, whose questioning of conventional attitudes frequently involved the use of ostentatious shock-tactics, do not always endear themselves, even after the passage of twenty-three centuries, to the squeamish or the genteel.¹

These same factors have worked in recent years to stimulate an upsurge of interest in the Cynics, as evidenced for example in the numerous publications of Margarethe Billerbeck² and M.-O. Goulet-Cazé.³ The literary evidence for ancient Cynicism, inadequate and frustrating as it is, has now been very competently collected and equipped with commentary and bibliographies by G. Giannantoni,⁴ and the challenge of interpreting it is being vigorously met. Nor are we so averse from taking seriously a

¹ Or even to Marxist historians: cf. M.I. Finley, *Aspects of Antiquity* (London, 1968) 89-101

² See especially her bibliographical introduction to the volume of reprinted articles she has edited, *Die Kyniker in der modernen Forschung* (Amsterdam, 1991).

³ E.g. 'Le Cynisme à l'époque impériale' in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II.36.4 (1990) 2720-2833.

⁴ *Socraticorum Reliquiae* Elenchos Coll. 7 I-IV (Naples), 1983-85.

it is being vigorously met. Nor are we so averse from taking seriously a populist philosophy which disclaimed intellectual theorizing, rejected establishment values, concerned itself with the individual's relationship to Nature (albeit undefined), and concentrated on such ethical problems as the distribution of wealth which other philosophical sects passed over or treated as marginal.

The mainstream study of early Christianity remains somewhat ambiguous towards Cynicism. While writers such as A.J. Malherbe have urged its relevance, one will look in vain for the entry 'Cynicism' in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*⁶ ('Platonism' is there, of course, and 'Aristotle', 'Stoicism', and 'Epicureanism') or in the formidable index volume to the splendidly revised Schürer.⁷ F.G.Downing has in a series of books and articles sought to bring the growing understanding of Cynicism to bear on the study of the gospels and the early church.⁸ In this book he 'aims to analyse and chronicle the varying relationships, positive and negative, between kinds of early Christianity and the radical socially critical ascetic "philosophy" of sorts of Cynics' (p. vii). He regards Cynicism as an all-pervading influence in the Eastern Mediterranean at the time of Christ, places great importance on the overlaps between Cynic teaching and the gospels, and sees the most plausible explanation of these in the hypothesis of direct Cynic influence on Jesus himself, who, he suggests, consciously saw himself as a Cynic: 'the Cynic role for this Jewish teacher only makes sense if it is one Jesus chose for himself' (p.156). Jesus' teaching was recorded in Q in the mid 50s: Q had a 'markedly Cynic character', and its nearest generic model is to be found in the Lives of Cynic philosophers, which consisted of a concentrated summary of their subject's teaching, illustrated by some of his characteristic sayings or actions (p.117); this genre is exemplified by Lucian's *Demonax* (late 2nd century A.D.) or the Lives in the sixth book of

⁶ Second edition by F.L.Cross and E.A.Livingstone (Oxford, 1974).

⁷ Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, revised and edited by G.Vermes, F.Millar, M.Goodman, 3 vols. in 4 (Edinburgh, 1973-87).

⁸ These are listed in the present work, pp. 309-10: note especially his *Christ and the Cynics* (Sheffield, 1988).

earlier than the 3rd century A.D.; but see p. 330). From Paul's time onwards, and throughout the early centuries of the Church, on Downing's view, Christians with Cynic leanings were to be found alongside more socially conformist strands of Christianity, and the tensions between the two are investigated in the second half of his book.

Downing's central thesis is a challenging one, especially, as he points out himself, at a time when much recent work has emphasized the Jewishness of Jesus, with the underlying assumption that Judaea in the first century A.D. was a place apart, immune from the intellectual and spiritual forces which were being felt in the rest of the Mediterranean and Near East (p. 144). Against this prevailing view, Downing offers us a Galilee dominated by the cosmopolitan cities of Gadara, with its long-standing tradition of Cynic literature, and Sepphoris, 'Herod Agrippa's "thriving Hellenistic capital city" built in Jesus' childhood, less than five miles away' from Nazareth (p. 148). His Jesus has a way of life and a teaching style for which there are no clear Jewish models: 'it is among later Cynics that the teacher moves footloose from place to place, includes women along with men, and simply says what he has to say without appeal to any other authority' (p. 155); he 'preaches a Cynic rejection of [the] twin convictions' of his contemporaries (and of Paul) that 'the existing authorities are ordained by God' and that 'financial prosperity ... is God's gift, a reward for virtue' (p. 159); admittedly his healing ministry does not fit easily into a Cynic pattern (p. 161), but Cynic thinkers did habitually emphasize health, and respected the role of the physician. The story in Mark of Jesus' encounter with the Syrophoenician woman takes on a special significance for Downing: here he draws attention to Jesus' Cynic brusqueness of speech, the respect he shows to a woman who is adept in repartee, and above all the canine imagery, shared by Jesus and the woman, of the dogs who gobble up the crumbs the children drop (p. 156).

Downing's hypothesis of a Cynic Christ and Cynic-style Q Christians is intriguing and, as he points out in his brief *Conclusions* (pp. 302-4), not without ultra-academic significance. He is well-informed on ancient Cynicism (for which his opening chapters provide what is in many ways the best introduction available in English) and on the modern literature devoted to it. He might

English) and on the modern literature devoted to it. He might perhaps have added that one versatile Cynic, Cercidas (*fl.* 222 B.C.), distinguished himself as a poet, ambassador, military commander, and legislator of Megalopolis in Arcadia, and thus represents a remarkable combination of radical thought and public service. One part of his thesis, that the Greco-Roman world was capable of interpreting in Cynic terms alien philosophies which embodied a large measure of asceticism, could have been supported by reference to the accounts in Arrian, *Anab.* 7.1-2 and elsewhere of the Gymnosophists encountered by Alexander in India.⁹

The difficulty, of course, is evidence; as so often in the study of Cynicism (or indeed of Christian origins), there is not enough of it. To counter this deficiency Downing is often forced to depend on unprovable hypotheses and arguments from probability; and not infrequently one hypothesis is used as the foundation on which another is erected. Q, if it existed, may well have looked more Cynic than the gospels as we have them; but its very existence is hypothetical, and the definition of its contents is far from uncontroversial. Jesus and his followers may indeed have had many dealings with the city of Sepphoris; but the place is not mentioned in the New Testament (as Downing acknowledges, p.148). Cynicism may possibly have had a rural form (pp. 82-3), though the evidence suggests it was an urban phenomenon, a reaction against the excesses of the sophisticated *polis* which asserts the opposing values of the simple countryside.¹⁰ Let it be said that Downing is open

⁹ In fact, the non-Greek aspects of Cynicism and its congeners should have been considered: cf. G.Rudberg in Billerbeck (ed.) *op.cit.* [n.1] 128-9. According to Lucian, *Tox.* 34 the Cynic Demetrius spent the last years of his life among the Brahmins in India. In his discussion of Cynic traits in the eastern Syrian church (pp. 271-5) Downing does not explore the question of how Cynic influence may have reached that part of the world: is there a case for positing at least a degree of contamination with oriental asceticism?

¹⁰ Shepherds, like Cynics, wore rough clothes, carried a staff, and kept their iron rations in a *pera*: the point of the *pera* is not, I think, that it could be used as a begging-bag, but that it enabled its bearer to be self-sufficient. Cf. M.-O. Goulet-Cazé 2739 'la

about his procedures, and scrupulously honest about admitting the hypothetical nature of his interpretations: e.g. 'the reconstruction offered here remains just as imaginative as those with which it competes' (p.164), and 'we have had to accept that no such considerable independent evidence for Jesus' Galilee is available' (p.165). But the imaginative reconstruction has frequently to rely on such inferential propositions as this passage from p. 142:

What is being urged is that there is sufficient common ground [between Cynics and Christians], there are sufficient signs of agreed common meaning for it to be very unlikely that the people who produced Q were unaware of the similarities or, indeed, also unaffected by the model of the Cynic *bios*. If Paul could be aware of Cynic discourse ... and mostly distance himself from Cynic attitudes, so we must presume could the Q Christians have distanced themselves quite clearly from Cynics had they wanted to. That they shew no effective sign of any such distancing can only suggest that they were entirely content that the similarities should stand and be perceived.

Downing's painstaking survey of Cynic influence in the early Church is intended to act as a check against mere speculation, and to demonstrate that 'a consistent trajectory' (p.166) of Cynic thought and attitudes observable in the early centuries can be used to reinforce the view that Cynicism was one of the original ingredients of Christianity. Apart from feeling misgivings about this procedure (is the metaphor dictating the method?), one may wonder if the survey reveals any such consistency, rather than a complex pattern in which some writers (e.g. Jerome, Gregory Nazianzen) exhibit a relationship (whether hostile or sympathetic) to Cynic ideas, but others do not. At times Downing seems to be admitting as much, e.g. 'By no means all the documents usually seen as stemming from Jewish Christianity display any clear Cynic traces' (p. 197); and he dutifully records nil returns for I and II Clement and Barnabas (p.

nécessaire à sa vie quotidienne'. By contrast, the instruction to the missionaries in Luke 10.4 to carry no purse or *pera* made them utterly dependent on others.

dutifully records nil returns for I and II Clement and Barnabas (p. 198), as for Athanasius (pp. 255-57). It is with the institutionalized asceticism of the monastic orders that Cynic influences become demonstrably important. But even here one is nagged by a problem of definition: if, as Downing contends, Cynicism was part of Christianity from the beginning, does it make sense to think in terms of a separate Cynic influence rather than the re-assertion of an ascetic streak in Christianity which may originally have been derived in part from Cynicism? One passage will serve to exemplify the problem:

Despite his disgust at Cynic immodesty, Lactantius' understanding of Christian discipleship is still deeply coloured by Cynic ascetic ideals. It may even be possible at this stage, and in the west, that the Cynic origin of this interpretation of Christian ethics is lost, or all but forgotten. Overt, radical Cynicism of the oldest tradition is known from books, and repudiated. A gentler Cynicism is totally and anonymously naturalised as inherently and integrally part and parcel of a Christian life-style. (p.220)

But if we admit this possibility, does it make sense to continue to try to distinguish the Cynic stream in the Christian river?

Downing has taken considerable pains to make his book, with its interdisciplinary approach, accessible to all categories of readers: he writes in a lively style;¹¹ in addition to a bibliography and three indices he provides a useful appendix (pp.326-39) of 'Dramatis personae', and a glossary of philosophical and literary terms (pp.343-6). Unfortunately numerous irritating slips, mostly minor, have crept in, especially in the names of scholars, e.g. D.R.Dudley becomes D.B.Dudley, Bowersock is Bowerstock, and Wiedemann comes out as Weidemann, and occasionally of authors, e.g. Gregory Nazianzenus appears as Nazianzus. There is a scattering of other misprints, some of which might cause confusion: e.g. on p.132 line 4 'and' is omitted; on p.184 line 10 'defied' should

¹¹ Infelicities such as the expression 'loud-mouthed cheek' (p.32) are fairly rare.

In short: Downing has raised an important set of questions, and proposed interesting responses. That these fall well short of proof is largely to be blamed on the defective state of the evidence, but this book should prompt students both of antiquity and of the early Church to re-examine their views on the contacts between early Christianity and the Cynics, and to re-assess the impact which the Christian message made on the Greco-Roman world.

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